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DEPT PASS TO G STAFFER JOAQUIN FERRAO AND DRL/MLGA GIANNA
PAZ

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TAGS: PHUM KDEM PREL UNGA PGOV CA

SUBJECT: CANADIAN VIEWS ON COMMUNITY OF DEMOCRACIES

REF: STATE 129764

¶1. (C) According to the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade's Democracy Unit Manager Ben Rowswell, Canada's UN Permrep Ambassador John McNee will represent Ottawa in the CD meeting hosted by Mali on October 1. He expressed hope that Deepak Obhrai, Parliamentary Secretary to the Foreign Minister, would attend the Bamako Ministerial. On specific points responding to reftel demarche, Rowswell offered the following:

-- Canada will not be offering logistical support to Mali but will provide political and diplomatic support;

-- Canada has not entertained any contributions to the Secretariat, but would consider if asked;

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-- Canada is not an active member of the working groups, but has funded a "handbook for diplomats" written by former Ambassador Jeremy Kinsman;

-- Under its "Glyn Berry Program" (a C\$10 million fund for democratization projects, formerly known as the "Human Security Fund"), Canada is setting aside C\$3 million for training in support of the CD's activities;

-- Canada has long sought ways to support NGOs promoting democratization, and recently contributed C\$250,000 to the "International Network of Democracies," part of the World Movement for Democracy Project;

-- The GOC sent a representative to the OAS-AU Democracy Bridge meeting, but assessed that the meeting was not very productive because of the great dissimilarities between the two organizations. The GOC nonetheless considers this kind of effort to be worthwhile and will continue to offer support;

-- Canada did not contribute to the first tranche of UNDEF projects due to concerns about programs funded through UN Trust Funds. The GOC plans to examine the results of the first tranche of projects in spring 2008 and see what was accomplished before committing any funding. Overall, the GOC is pleased with what it has seen thus far and likes that UNDEF projects work through civil society groups rather than governments.

¶2. (C) Rowswell noted that it was too early for Canada to consider taking a leadership role in the CD in the future. He commented that, if Parliamentary Secretary Obhrai attended the Bamako meeting and came back enthused, he might be able

to inject some political energy into Canada's future participation.

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